

Huntington Community Development Agency

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Everything you need to know about affordable housing

Affordable housing lotteries generate many questions, and sometimes, even confusion. Huntington Community Development Agency (HCDA) is pleased to offer the following information and advice to help potential applicants understand and prepare to participate in an affordable housing lottery.

Q: What is an affordable housing lottery?

A: An affordable housing lottery is a means by which affordable units (either rental or ownership) are offered to persons that meet the prescribed income, asset or other relevant criteria set forth by Huntington Town Code. Each housing development that contains affordable units has its own lottery, and the eligibility criteria can vary depending upon the project.

Q: How do I find out about Town of Huntington affordable housing lotteries?

A: Visit <http://www.huntingtonny.gov/cda> to register yourself to receive email notifications that will announce availability of affordable housing.

Q: I just received notification of an affordable housing lottery, what is the first step?

A: The first step is determining if you are eligible for an affordable unit. The guidelines are different for affordable senior developments, non-age-restricted, first-time homebuyer developments, ownership and rental. Each development has its own set of guidelines. Reading the guidelines carefully to determine if you are eligible will save you time and money (there is a nominal administrative entry fee for each lottery).

Q: I've read the guidelines and believe I'm eligible, what now?

A: If you believe you are eligible, complete the Lottery Intake Form for that affordable housing development and submit it along with your administrative fee by the deadline date to Huntington Community Development Agency, 100 Main Street, Room 309, Huntington, NY 11743. Important: only **one** Lottery Intake Form per household is allowed. Applicants who submit more than one Intake Form will be disqualified.

Q: How do I confirm that I will be included in the lottery?

A: Lottery Intake Forms that have been completed and submitted to HCDA on or before the deadline will be reviewed to assess basic eligibility for the lottery. If the Agency has questions or concerns about your Intake Form you will be contacted. Several days prior to the lottery, the last names and first initial of lottery participants will be posted on the Town's web site. This is an opportunity for applicants to confirm their inclusion in the lottery. The Agency reserves the right to delay posting the list, if necessary.

Q: Am I required to attend the lottery? What happens at a lottery?

A: It is not necessary to attend the lottery to be in the running for an affordable unit. The lottery is a public event that utilizes a random system to create a sequential order for HCDA to process, in numerical order, the applications of those who entered. Whether you are present or not, you will receive a rank number.

Q: The lottery has been completed and I now have a rank number, what happens next?

A: Starting with rank # 1 and so on, HCDA will contact applicants to ask that they complete a formal application requiring the submission of financial and other needed documentation to prove their eligibility for a unit. HCDA will give applicant/s ten (10) business days to complete the formal application and supply the back-up documentation requested. If the documentation provided satisfies the eligibility criteria for the affordable program, HCDA will then authorize the applicant/s to either sign a lease (if a rental unit) or a contract (if ownership) with the developer of the housing community.

Failure to deliver all required documentation to the Agency within the ten-day timeframe shall be cause for disqualification. Should an applicant fail to qualify, the next applicant on the list will be contacted to begin the formal application process. This process will continue until there are approved applicants for all of the affordable units. Any remaining applicants shall remain on a waiting list held by the Agency for that development, and will be contacted upon such time an affordable unit becomes available again.

Q: Does HCDA assist in financing the unit?

A: No. HCDA does not get involved in financing affordable units. The Agency's sole role is to manage the lottery list for the affordable units and qualify applicants to occupy them. Applicants should turn to traditional sources for mortgage financing.

Q: What happens when I am ready to sell my affordable unit?

A: You must notify Huntington Community Development Agency. HCDA will go back to the original lottery list to invite the next person waiting to apply for the unit. No real estate agents or brokers may be involved in the sale or resale of an affordable unit. Huntington Community Development Agency monitors the sale and resale of all affordable units. For its services HCDA is paid one (1%) percent of the contract sale price by the seller at or prior to closing.

Affordable Housing eligibility – Ownership Units

Once Huntington Community Development Agency makes contact with applicant/s to advise it has reached their lottery rank number, certain documentation will be required to certify that the applicant/s meet the criteria set forth in the program. Some of the basic rules include:

- Applicant/s must reside full-time in the affordable unit they purchase.
- Applicant/s combined household income cannot exceed the maximum household income stated in application. HCDA will include and calculate income from all adult household members (age 18 or older).
- At the time of application, first-time homebuyer program applicant/s cannot own, or have owned, any other residential real estate for the past three years.

- First-time homebuyers or purchasers of non-senior affordable housing may not have assets, which, after deduction of down payment and estimated closing costs, exceed 25% of the contract price of the affordable unit.
- For 55-year and over affordable housing programs:
 - At least one applicant must be 55-years of age at the time of application, and
 - It is expected that a person 55-years or older will have a home to be sold in order to purchase the affordable unit. Therefore, in this case ownership of a home at application is allowable.
- Applicant/s for 55-year and over affordable housing may not have assets, which after down payment and estimated closing costs, exceed 100% of the purchase price of the affordable unit. The value of the home to be sold, less any mortgage or other obligations will be counted as an asset.
- Affordable housing is subject to resale restrictions. Owners of affordable housing must contact Huntington Community Development Agency when ready to sell so the Agency can find a new affordable buyer.
- As a rule of thumb, monthly rent or ownership housing expenses (including mortgage loan payments, mortgage insurance, HOA dues and property taxes) should not exceed 40% of an applicant's monthly income.
- Applicants for ownership units are generally required to provide the developer with a down payment of at least ten percent (10%) of the purchase price.
- Gifts from outside parties for the purchase of affordable units are permitted. However, the gift cannot exceed 20% of the purchase price and must be accompanied by a "gift letter" indicating that the gift is not expected to be repaid.
- Applicants are highly encouraged to collect their financial documentation and begin working with a mortgage lender for pre-qualification.

Affordable Housing eligibility – Rental Units

- Applicant/s must reside full-time in the affordable rental.
- Applicant/s combined household income cannot exceed the maximum household income stated in application. HCDA will include and calculate income from all adult household members (age 18 or older).
- Applicant/s will be subject to a credit check by the developer that will take place prior to eligibility qualification by HCDA. If the applicant passes the credit check, the HCDA will next ask for documentation to certify eligibility for an affordable unit. If the applicant does not pass the credit check, he/she will be disqualified from moving forward.
- Due to different income levels and apartment and family sizes, the unit an applicant qualifies for may not necessarily be available based on rank number from the lottery. If this occurs, the applicant will be placed on a waiting list for future vacancies. Applicants are placed on the waiting list in the order in which they are ranked in the lottery.
- For HCDA's services one thousand (\$1,000) dollars per rental unit, or one month's rent, whichever is lower, is due to the Agency by the tenant at or before lease signing.

- Recertification of income is required annually of each tenant in an affordable unit at lease renewal.

General information

- Representatives of the Huntington Community Development Agency shall not restrict affordable housing applicants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation.
- Generally, the maximum occupancy limit is equal to twice the number of bedrooms in the home plus one person. A “household” is all persons-related or unrelated-who occupy a single housing unit full-time
- The housing developer and the Huntington Community Development Agency will make reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services at the request of persons with disabilities when these accommodations are reasonable and necessary to give disabled persons equal opportunity to apply for an affordable home. If applicant requires such accommodations due to a disability, please submit a request in writing at the time application is submitted describing the accommodation request, the reasons for it and a signed physician statement verifying the need for the accommodation requested.
- Good credit is essential in securing any kind of housing! If an applicant needs assistance with repairing, viewing or understanding credit HCDA recommends three outstanding housing organizations that offer free credit counseling as follows:

Long Island Housing Services

640 Johnson Avenue, Suite 8
Bohemia, NY 11716
(Suffolk): (631) 567-5111
(Nassau): (516)-292-0400

Long Island Housing Partnership

180 Oser Avenue, Suite 800
Hauppauge, NY 11788
(631) 435-4710

Housing Help, Inc.

91 Broadway, Suite 6
Greenlawn, NY 11740
(631) 754-0373

For more information about affordable housing contact:

Huntington Community Development Agency
100 Main Street, room 309
Huntington, NY 11743
(631) 351- 2884
Email: dteets@ huntingtonny.gov